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Pope Leo XIV greets a child from the popemobile while riding around St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican before his weekly general audience June 24, 2026. (CNS/Vatican Media)

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Participation in the Eucharist transforms believers into the body of Christ and offers a remedy to the divisions affecting families and communities, Pope Leo XIV said during his weekly general audience June 24.

In his final general audience until Aug. 5, Leo also encouraged young people to use the downtime of summer vacation to attend Mass, go to confession frequently, reflect on Scripture, go on spiritual retreats and pilgrimages and spend time with loved ones.

"Vacation is a time for rest and to seek signs of God in the beauty of creation," he said in his remarks to Polish-speaking visitors. He also asked people to pray for students so that they may "choose wisely" the schools and universities they will attend and "discern with prudence their vocation."

Continuing his series on the documents of the Second Vatican Council, the pope focused on "Sacrosanctum Concilium," the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, explaining how the Eucharist draws the faithful into deeper communion with God and one another.

Receiving Christ in the Eucharist transforms believers into the body of Christ, whose head is the risen Lord seated at the right hand of the Father, the pope said.

"Thus, the Eucharist is the sacrament of the Kingdom that is to come," Leo said.

The Eucharist teaches Catholics to adopt Christ's way of self-giving love and to be "drawn day by day into ever more perfect union with God and with each other," he said.

"This gift draws us into the dynamic of unity, offering a powerful antidote to the forces of division that undermine our world, our communities, our families, and our hearts," he said.

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The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy teaches that the faithful are called to "offer themselves in union with Jesus Christ" to the Father "through the hands of the priest and together with him," the pope said. Participation in the Eucharist also means being formed by God's word and "nourished at the table of the Lord's body."

The Eucharist cannot be separated from the Word of God, the pope said, noting that the liturgy and the Eucharist form "one single act of worship." Quoting Pope Benedict XVI, he said Scripture illuminates and explains the mystery of the Eucharist, while the Eucharist opens believers to a deeper understanding of Scripture.

"This Word nourishes and sustains us together with the Eucharistic bread and leads us from the decay of sin to new life in Christ," Leo said.

Referring to the Second Vatican Council's focus on giving Catholics greater access to Scripture, the pope pointed to the Lectionary — the book containing the biblical readings proclaimed at Mass — as a result of the council's liturgical reform. The expanded collection of readings used in the church's liturgies today, he said, reflects the richness of the church's living tradition, combining "fidelity to tradition with openness to legitimate progress."

"Dear brothers and sisters, let us draw with faith from this source of divine life and allow ourselves to be transformed by the mystery we celebrate," he said.